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New Delta Study Bolsters Governor's "Delta Vision"

Sacramento – Governor Schwarzenegger's "Delta Vision" is reinforced by a new report released today that recommends alternative solutions for environmental problems that face the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The report, by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), finds that current management of the Delta is unsustainable, with fragile levees and decline of some Delta species of special concern.

"Following the Governor's Executive Order to create a vision for the Delta's future, we've established a blue ribbon task force and we're moving forward to address many of the problems identified in this report," said Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman. "There's no question that much of what is identified by this study will help guide us in this process."

The report evaluates water supply, environmental impacts and fiscal costs, recommending alternative paths of future Delta management and improvement.

Recognizing the unique role of the Delta in supporting California's environmental and economic resources, Governor Schwarzenegger signed an executive order in September 2006 to develop a Delta Vision to provide a sustainable management program for the Delta. The Delta Vision process, which is now underway, will be instrumental in the development of a plan to deal with the challenges facing the Delta today and in the future.

"The PPIC report is a helpful, innovative resource document in the complex but necessary struggle to revitalize the Delta for the 21st Century," said Department of Water Resources Lester Snow. "This study can help focus stakeholders and policy-makers on realistic strategies to renew this vital, but troubled estuary."

The Governor also signed several bills last year that relate to the Delta and water quality issues, including SB 1574, (Kuehl) that created a cabinet-level committee to guide the development of a strategic vision for the Delta.

DWR is a leading California water policy agency and a partner with other public agencies and stakeholders in efforts to revitalize the Delta. Snow, who served as the first Executive Director of CALFED from 1995 to 1999, and has been at DWR since 2004, said it is essential to "fix" the Delta for environmental reasons and to safeguard the quality and reliability of a key drinking water supply for more than 23 million Californians.

"Today's Delta problems are big, but its future value can be great," said Snow.

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